

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 3, 2011
TO: Policy Committee
FROM: W. Scott Whyte, Senior Landscape Planner
SUBJECT: Development Standards – Landscaping/Outdoor Operations and Storage

I. Outdoor Operations and Storage

Outdoor operations and storage are covered in section 24-41 of the zoning ordinance. The regulations cover any commercial or industrial operation or storage conducted out-of-doors with the following performance standards:

- A 35' buffer must be provided adjacent to the right of way.
- The storage area must have an adequate drainage system.
- Areas that are frequently disturbed must have all weather surfaces.
- The outdoor storage must be adequately screened from adjacent properties.
- Objectionable effects such as noise odor, dust, or any other objectionable effect are prohibited.

As part of the review of landscaping development standards in the Zoning Ordinance, staff researched the outdoor operations and storage ordinance's effectiveness and compatibility with other requirements, specifically focusing on known areas of concern.

II. Discussion Items

A. **Ordinance effectiveness and compatibility with other requirements**

1. Description of issue/ problem

Staff looked at the outdoor operations and storage section of the ordinance to determine if there were any improvements or revisions that would make it more effective or that would eliminate conflicts with other parts of the zoning ordinance. Some concerns have been expressed over time that screening has not been adequate.

2. History

Section 24-41 first appeared in the ordinance in 1985; it was slightly amended in 1988 and 1990 to provide additional screening. The basic intent was to screen outdoor operations adequately from public rights of way and to ensure those operations occurred on a site that drained and had an appropriate surface.

3. Comprehensive Plan GSAs, public input, and PC and BOS direction

- *Based on public concern expressed during several cases in the past 24 months, Planning Commission members requested staff to review this issue.*
- *There was no additional PC or BOS direction provided regarding this topic during input opportunities on the Zoning Ordinance update process.*

4. Solutions and Policy Options

- *Staff has found that the outdoor operations and storage ordinance slightly conflicts with the landscape ordinance which was adopted in 1999, and has been a source of confusion. A landscape area is required for all projects adjacent to a right of ways by ordinance section 24-96. The landscape area varies in width depending on whether the*

road is a Community Character Corridor or not. In commercial areas CCCs require a 50' wide landscape area and all other roads require a 30' wide landscape area. Since all commercial or industrial developments that are adjacent to rights of way are required to have landscape areas, the two ordinance sections conflict concerning the width of the landscape area, and the requirements become redundant. Staff recommends addressing the outdoor operation screening in section 24-41 in the landscaping portion of the zoning ordinance, section 24-96.

- *A clause that requires upright evergreens to be used in the landscape areas adjacent to outdoor operation uses could be added along with the other requirements for outdoor storage.*
- 5. **Staff recommendations**
Staff recommends the Policy Committee support the changes staff has proposed concerning the outdoor operation and storage section of the zoning ordinance. Consolidating the requirements into the landscape section would help insure that outdoor operation screening requirement are not missed, as all developments must consult the landscape section of the zoning ordinance, while not all developers realize that the outdoor operations section exists. In addition, adding more specificity regarding the type of landscape treatment expected to include upright evergreens will improve the screening effectiveness. The result would be a simpler requirement and a more user friendly ordinance. This type of language could also be worked into our proposed CCC buffer treatment descriptions.

III. Conclusion

Staff recommends that the Policy Committee support the proposed changes to sections of the ordinance that pertain to outdoor operations and storage to eliminate conflicts and to increase screening effectiveness, thereby simplifying the requirements and making it a more user-friendly ordinance.